

THE
Downfal of Bribery:

OR, THE
HONEST MEN of *Taunton.*

A
New BALLAD-OPERA
OF THREE ACTS.

As it was lately perform'd by a Company of
Players at a certain Noted Inn at *Taunton*
in *Somersetshire.*

By *MARK FREEMAN*, of the said
Town, Freeholder and Grocer.

*A few Persons at Taunton, who had it in their
Power to turn the Election of a Mayor, lately
refused a Sum of Two THOUSAND POUNDS
for their Votes upon that Occasion.*

CRAFTSMAN, N^o 385. Nov. 24. 1733.

May our Examples Means sufficient prove,
For more in the same shining Path to move:
To stop CORRUPTION boldly let's essay,
Mar BRIBES, and give fair LIBERTY the Day.
Vide Conclusion of the OPERA.

To which is added,

A NEW BALLAD by way of Epilogue.

Spoken by the Person who acted in the Character of *Freeman*.

L O N D O N:

Printed for SAM. PIER, near the *Temple-Gate* in *Fleet-Street*; and sold by the Booksellers of *London* and *Westminster.*



Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Mr. Freeman,
Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Firm,
Mr. Constant, } *Electors.*

Mr. Procurer,
Mr. Mercenary, } *C—t Agents.*

Mr. Standfast,
Mr. Trimmer, } *Candidates for the*
Mayoralty.

Ned,
Jack, } *Mob.*

Teller.

W O M E N.

Mrs. Freeman
Mrs. Chapman
Mrs. Firm
Mrs. Constant

Drawers, Attendants, &c.

SCENE * * * * *Inn, at Taunton in*
Somersetshire.

Dramatis Personae

M. E. N.

Mr. Freeman,
Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Tins,
Mr. Constance,

Mr. Freeman,
Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Tins,
Mr. Constance,

Mr. Freeman,
Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Tins,
Mr. Constance,

Mr. Freeman,
Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Tins,
Mr. Constance,

Teller

W. O. M. E. N.

Mr. Freeman,
Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Tins,
Mr. Constance,

Mr. Freeman,
Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Tins,
Mr. Constance,

Mr. Freeman,
Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Tins,
Mr. Constance,

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(1)



THE
Downfal of Bribery:
OR, THE
Honest Men of Taunton.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

*Discovers Mrs. Freeman with a Candle, and
a News-Paper in her Hand, reading.*

YESTERDAY Morning Dr.
Hollings, one of the Physicians
that attended the Prince of
Orange. [*Knocking at the Door.*]

Who's there?

B

Mr.

2 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

Mr. Freeman. One.

Mrs. Freeman. [*opening the Door.*] Oh! is it you? I am glad of it: I wonder you chuse to stay out so late every Night.

Mr. Freeman. Yes, my Dear, 'tis I; [*entering, and saluting her*] you must excuse my late Hours, as they happen but seldom, on account of the Election.

Mrs. Freeman. I do, Love: But what have you been doing?

Mr. Freeman. If you can stay up, my Dear, I will tell you over a Bottle of Beer.

Mrs. Freeman. What is it a-Clock?

Mr. Freeman. [*Looking on his Watch.*] Just half an Hour after Nine: — That is not late.

Mrs. Freeman goes, and returns with a Bottle and Glass,

Mr. Freeman. I have refused such an Offer to-night, *Betsy*, as would make your Hair stand on End.

Mrs. Freeman. From whom, *Mr. Freeman*? but I hope, not absolutely;

Mr. Freeman. I am determin'd, indeed, Child.

AIR

A I R I.

To all you Ladies now at Land, &c.

No Future Times shall e're upbraid
Our Children with this Story,
That I for Gold, the Cause betray'd;
And fully'd *Taunton's* Glory:
No — Honesty, with just Disdain,
Beholds their Thousands told in vain.
Fa, la, la, &c.

Mrs. Freeman. What's all this? —
For, *Mr. Freeman*, I don't understand
you; — Come, explain yourself, and let
me participate with you.

Mr. Freeman. Why you must know,
I have been at the Tavern this Evening;
and there was Squire *Mercenary* and *Mr.*
Procurer, two very fine Gentlemen from
London.

Mrs. Freeman. And what of all that?

Mr. Freeman. They had a great deal
of fine Money.

Mrs. Freeman. How does that con-
cern you? — What are we the better for
it?

4 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

Mr. Freeman. And I was offered a very round Sum.

Mrs. Freeman. For what? — For God-fake tell me? — Why didn't you take it then? Money is welcome at all Times.

Mr. Freeman. Not for the World, my Dear, upon such an Occasion as that.

Mrs. Freeman. As what?

Mr. Freeman. Why, to vote for *Mr. Trimmer*.

Mrs. Freeman. I am glad, *Mr. Freeman*, you had so great a Command of your self, considering how Circumstances are. — I would sooner starve, than —

Mr. Freeman. So would I. — But be sure don't drop a Word for your Life,

Mrs. Freeman. Not I, truly.

A I R II.

In vain, Dear Chloe, &c.

My honest Soul, like yours, abhors,
All ill-got mercenary Stores,

Contented with my present Station;
No dirty Means would I employ
If by their *Bribes* I could enjoy
The best Place in the Nation.

II.

She. Secure in Innocence we live

He. 'Tis Honesty shall make us thrive:

She. Whilst Virtue's Dictates we obey,

He. The Great, the miserable Great,

She. Shall do the dirty Work of State;

He. And groan beneath *Corruption's*
(Sway.

Both. The Great, the miserable Great,
Shall do the dirty Works of State;

And groan beneath *Corruption's* Sway.

Mr. Freeman. I hope, not only my Neighbours, but all true *Englishmen*, will stand firm, and follow my Example.

Mrs. Freeman. 'Tis my Wish too, my Dear.

Mr. Freeman. Affairs are come to that pass, that our *Liberties and Properties* depend upon our present Integrity: For if we don't secure them now, God knows when we shall have another Opportunity.

Mrs. Freeman. But how did the Gentlemen brook it, when you refus'd them?

Mr. Freeman. With Impudence enough! with a *Bon Grace*. — Come, one more Glass, and then to Bed.

A I R

6 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

A I R III.

Fill ev'ry Glas.

Fill up the Glafs:
Hang *Bribes*,
And Tribes
Of Knaves designing to enslave.
How dear is Liberty to the Brave:
What more than Liberty, dear Liberty,
Can *Britons* crave?
Fill e'ery Glas:
Hang *Bribes*,
And Tribes
Of Knaves designing to enslave.

Scene changes to a Tavern.

*Squire Mercenary and Mr. Procurer, with
Wine and Glasses before them.*

Mer. These are comical Sons of Bitches,
Jack: I don't know what to make of 'em.

Proc. I am afraid, no Good, the Rascals
seem to be stubborn.

Mer. D—n this EXCISE! — It has done
our Cause more Harm than any Thing in
the World.

Proc. They seem to be inveterate a-
gainst us, and fir'd with a Spirit of Re-
sentment.

Mer.

The Honest Men of Taunton. . 7

Mer. I never knew a Parcel of Fellows so stupidly honest in my Life before.

Proc. They have hitherto refused a great deal of Money, indeed.

Mer. We must have one more Tryal at 'em.

Proc. Ay, the Election will not come on till next Day, I believe.

Mer. I am afraid, we shall be able to give but a melancholy Account of our Successes.

Proc. There is no great Likelihood we shall boast of any from this Quarter.

Mer. Double confound the Villains! they exhibit a bad Precedent.

Proc. As sure as you are alive, other Corporations will be influenced by it.

Mer. We shall have that seditious Son of a *Succubus*, the *Craftsman*, get hold of it.

Proc. And then 'twill fly all over the Kingdom like Light'ning.

Mer. Well, there is no Remedy. We have done what lay in our Power.

Proc. True, Brother: And what says *Ferdinando*, *A Man can't do more than he can do.*

Mer. Right: And, *So what can't be cur'd, must be endur'd.*

Proc. Certainly: But come, let us drink.
[*Drinking.*]

Proc.

8 *The Downfal of Bribery : Or,*

Mer. Never heed that; who would do
fuch dirty Work without a plentiful In-
dulgence.

Proc. Nobody, for certain. — Come,
drink Brother.

A I R IV.

The Laff of Patty's Mill.

Mer. The Man who's fully'd o'er
With *Bribery's* odious Stain,
Of Gold should have good Store,
To ease him of his Pain,
How would the Courtier weep?
How mourn his dire Disease?
Did Gain not lull to Sleep
His Woes, and give him Ease.

II.

Proc. O powerful Thirst of Gold !
Whoe'er your Charms withstood.
Yet *Taunton*, we are told,
Prefers the *Publick Good*.
What Good can Mortals share
Which Gold cannot procure?
Is Liberty so dear,
For't all Things to endure?

Mer.

The Honest Men of Taunton. 9

Mer. You see 'tis so here: They had rather be poor, than rich, in the Manner we propose.

Proc. Even so, Sir. — I could like to taste one of these *Somerset* Girls tho', — We bring it under the Article of a Treat.

Mer. I fancy you won't make much Progress amongst the fair Sex.

Proc. No, if they are as reserved as the Men: — Yet 'tis but trying.

Mer. Hardly worth while, Brother; for should you miss of your End, you will be blown.

Proc. I don't care for that; I'll try what's to be done.

Mer. Well, use your own Discretion.

Proc. Nothing alleviates Disappointments so much as a Woman's Company.

A I R V.

What tho' I am a Country Lass, &c.

What tho' my Money can't prevail,
Nor *bribe* th' Electors to turn Tail;
Yet sure in this I shall not fail
To make some Dame my Prey.

C

Mer.

10 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

Mer. Assure your self, the Dames won't fear
To act what Husbands boldly dare;
And all for Honesty declare.
Heedless of what you'll say.

Proc. We'll see to-morrow, Boy, if Opportunity serves.

Mer. And be defeated in both, I fear.

*How great is the Defeat that must ensue,
If Bribes not Men nor Women can subdue.*

End of the First ACT.





ACT II.

SCENE I.

Discovers Mr. Chapman and his Wife at Breakfast behind the Counter in his Shop.

Mr. Chap.  Urse this Sitting-up, it does one a deal of Harm, I believe.

Mrs. Chap. Harm! Ay, not only to yourself, Mr. Chapman, but your poor Wife and Family suffer severely by your Debauches.

Mr. Chap. I could have made you all amends for it last Night, my Dear, if I pleas'd.

Mrs. Chap. Amends! the Dev'l take me if I desire any of your Amends, only that you would amend your Hours and Ways.

Mr. Chap. A Bank Bill of Five Hundred Pounds, Girl!

12 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

Mrs. Chap. A Bank Bill of Five Hundred F—ts! don't think to fun me up with your Lyes.

Mr. Chap. 'Tis Fact.

Mrs. Chap. What's Fact?—That you'll ruin yourself and Family by your nightly Extravagancies, I know is Fact.

Mr. Chap. Come, come my Dear, be easy;—I had a good Curtain Lecture last Night, you know, and that's enough for one Fault.

Mrs. Chap. Enough! you ought to have your Memory refresh'd with it ten Times a Day, and that's the Way to shame you out on't.

Mr. Chap. Prithee be quiet, it cost me not a Farthing last Night;—and moreover, I could have brought home Money in my Pocket.

Mrs. Chap. Then I suppose you are to treat for it this Evening.

Mr. Chap. Not I, indeed.

Mrs. Chap. How then? Come, tell me the Truth, and I'll forgive you.

Mr. Chap. Forgive me! a pretty Fancy indeed, that a Man can't spend an Hour with his Friend at the Tavern, but must ask his Wife Forgiveness.

Mrs. Chap. Tell me then, Honey, do.

Mr. Chap. You shan't say I brought you home nothing: Here's a new Song, [*gives her*

The Honest Men of Taunton. 13

her a Piece of Paper] I would sing it myself, but my Head aches too much: It goes to the Tune of *Chevy-Chase*.

Mrs. Chap. I'll sing it then, shall I?

Mr. Chap. Ay, do my Dear.

A I R VI.

Chevy-Chase.

I.

*From London Town to Taunton Fair,
Two doughty 'Squires came,
Prepar'd to sow Dissention there,
And animate the Flame.*

II.

*Entreaties first were scatter'd round,
For Votes to chuse a Mayor;
But more Dependance they have found
On Money, than on Prayer.*

III.

*Two thousand Pounds, it is declar'd,
If Trimmer chosen be,
Shall be paid down as a Reward
For our Fidelity.*

IV. *In*

14 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

IV.

*In moving Accents each bold 'Squire
Propos'd this grand Affair,
How much it was their own Desire,
And our Superior's Care.*

V.

*Knowing these great Men were abus'd,
By such fallacious Elves,
Their Gifts we gallantly refus'd,
Full honest to ourselves,*

VI.

*And if they try at other Towns
These Tricks, most Men devise,
No more Success their Frauds will crown,
Than did at the Excise.*

Mr. Chap. How do you like it?

Mrs. Chap. Very well, my Dear: — But is it actually true?

Mr. Chap. 'Tis indeed; and to Night all the Electors, with their Wives, are invited to a grand Entertainment.

Mrs. Chap. Then I make one.

Mr. Chap. Ay, ay: — But their Schemes won't take; for we are determin'd.

Mrs. Chap. I am glad of it, my Dear; I would not have you vote any Way that
may

The Honest Men of Tounton. 15

may be in the least instrumental to the Revival of that cursed Scheme.

Mr. *Chap.* No, no, my Dear; but I can't help thinking how foolish these Gentlemen will look when they lose the Election.

A I R VII.

O ponder well, &c.

How dismal is the Look of Man,
When he has try'd in vain
Another's Conscience to trepan,
With Offers of vile Gain.

*Scene changes to a Publick House, Popu-
lace sit drinking at different Tables.*

1 *Mob.* Come, *Harry*, here's to you;
let's drink Success to our Cause.

A I R

16 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

A I R VIII.

Briskly Boys then charge your Glasses, &c.

Come, brave Boys, fill me a Brimmer,
Let us bouse it while we may;
Drink Success to 'Squire *Trimmer*,
And wish that he may win the Day.

Mob. Huzza! *Trimmer* for ever: No
Disaffection; Loyalty and *Trimmer*; no
Craftsman; the fair Trader! the fair Tra-
der! [*I Mob at the other Table.*

A I R IX.

Here's to thee my Boy, &c.

Britons born free,
Don't servilely
Your Liberty barter for Gold,
Barter for Gold;
Each look to himself,
And disdain the vile Pelf
That would bring him to Slavery,
That would, &c.

Mob. Huzza! No Bribery, no Corrup-
tion, no Excise, no *Trimmer*; *Standfast*
for ever!

I Mob.

The Honest Men of Taunton. 17

1 Mob. [Stepping from the other Table.] Why sure *Ned*, you are bewitch'd; I took you to be a Fellow of more Sense.

1 Mob at this Table. Bewitch'd! for what, *Jack*? Rot me if I won't stand up for *Liberty* and *Property*, and 'Squire *Standfast*, to the last Drop of Blood.

1 Mob of the other Party. Stand up for the Devil, won't you? If you don't shortly go to him, you must run away from hence; for I know your Circumstances, and now's a Time to retrieve yourself.

1 Mob of this Party. Retrieve myself! how? By *Bribery* and *Corruption*? No, no, *Jack*, that won't do.

1 Mob of the other. I tell you, *Ned*, [*calling him aside*] you will certainly have an Action out against you next Week; and if you'll step with me to the Tavern, I'll only speak a Word to 'Squire *Mercenary*, and you shall be Master of ten Guineas in a Moment.

1 Mob of this Table. Not I; I'll have none of the Devil's Money; I'll not act contrary to my Conscience for a thousand Pounds.

1 Mob of the other Party. What dost talk of Conscience, *Ned*; 'tis no Scruple of Conscience to take Money at any Time: Why, 'twill soder up your Affairs as whole as ever.

D

1 Mob.

18 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

1 *Mob.* Why, look you here, *Jack*, suppose I take this Money; 'tis but partly my own, because I contributed to it before: There's ne'er a Pair of Shoes that we wear, nor a Pound of Candles that we buy, but these Folk have something out on't, which now they squander away amongst us, that we may chuse Men to load us with heavier Taxes.

2 *Mob.* Say you, *Ned*; it can't be, can it?

1 *Mob.* Why, yes, 'tis plain enough.

2 *Mob.* As how?

1 *Mob.* Why, suppose we vote for Mr. *Trimmer* to be Mayor:

2 *Mob.* Well! what then?

1 *Mob.* Then he (as he is the returning Officer) will favour them who voted for the *Excise*.

2 *Mob.* And what of that?

1 *Mob.* And if they are chosen Parliament Men, they will vote for the *Excise* again; or if that should never be canvas'd again, yet upon all Occasions will give their Votes for increasing our Taxes; and I think that's enough.

2 *Mob.* Godso, I did not think of these Things.

1 *Mob.* 'Tis certainly so.

2 *Mob.*

The Honest Men of Taunton. 19

2 *Mob.* I have a great Mind to give the
'Squire my Money again ; but come, let's
drink, and consider on't.

A I R X.

Sweet are the Charms, &c.

Can such Deceits in Mankind dwell,
If zealous for their Country's Weal ?
Their Fellow-Creatures such annoy,
And mutually themselves destroy :
Thus *Bribes* for outward Blessings sent,
At last prove inward Punishment,

1 *Mob.* 'Tis very true, *Jack* ; indeed, I
would return the Money, if I was you.

2 *Mob.* So I will.

1 *Mob.* Then you and I will go toge-
ther.

2 *Mob.* With all my Heart.

1 *Mob.* I'll drink but this Glass, and
that shall be a Bumper. [*Drinking,*

20 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

A I R X I.

A Cobler there was, &c.

Come listen ye Gulls whom *Bribery* coaxes,
For *Lucre* to mortgage your Votes to C—t
 Foxes,
With Feasting and Boofing, tho' now they
 may treat,
Ere a Year's at an end they will prove
 fow'r Meat. *Derry down, &c.*

With Dainties they cram you, and curious
 Repast,
Yet yourselves must discharge the Fiddlers
 at last;
Then who, like *Tom Noodles*, on this Score
 would feed,
When the Reck'ning's at last for your Share
 decreed. *Derry down, &c.*

End of the Second ACT.



A C T III.

S C E N E I.

A Bed-Chamber at an Inn, Procurer and Mercenary; the former dressing himself before a Pier-Glass.

Proc. OW or never, Mr. Mercenary.

Mer. This Day, indeed Sir, either blasts our Hopes, or crowns them with Success.

Procur. Yes; To-morrow the Election comes on.

[*Looking at a Heap of Money on the Table.*]

A I R XII.

Happy Groves, &c.

Cruel, cruel, cruel Thing,
That all this Gold no Votes will bring!

In

22 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

In what uncommon Mould were these
Loobies form'd, whom *Bribes* can't please?

[Taking up a Handful of Money.

Sturdy Villains,
Vile Rapscallians,
Deaf to Rhetorick's Voice;
Half this told in other Towns,
Would gain an easy Choice.

Mer. We must push home indeed. — I
never knew such perverse Folk in my
Life.

Proc. Nor I, by my Soul: I'll venture
a Wager they read the damn'd *Craftsman*,
and so are tinctur'd with his Notions.

Mer. Very likely; and that makes them
so much against *Bribery* and *Corruption*.

Proc. Well, we have provided a good
Dinner for the Dogs to-day.

Mer. And Plenty of Wine.

Proc. Their Wives likewise have an In-
vitation.

Mer. We must ply both stoutly.

Proc. Yes, yes; Petticoat-Interest proves
often the strongest.

Mer. As might be demonstrated by our
—— But mum for that.

Proc. I hate to fail in my Negotiations;
— I intend to try all Ways.

A I R

A I R XIII.

Thus I stand like Turk, &c.

All the Frauds and Deceits a fage Cour-
tier can hatch,
Shall now be consulted this fly Prey to
catch.

I'll ply them, and try them, with what
most they admire,

And gratify nobly each Sex's Desire.

Should Master be willing to finger the
Pelf,

Here 'tis ; and should Madam desire
myself, [*Laying his Hand on
the Money.*]

Both Pelf and myself I would freely
reign

On this bare Condition, that the May'r
should be mine.

Mer. Well, we must not lose Time ; are
you for Walking ?

Proc. This Moment, Sir.

Mer. I am afraid we shall make our
Friends wait at the Tavern.

Proc. No, no. [*He takes up the Money.*]
Exeunt.

Scene

24 *The Downfal of Bribery : Or,*

Scene changes to the Tavern.

*Mr. Freeman, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Firm,
Mr. Constant, and their Wives, with
several others.*

A I R XIV.

Bellfize.

Mr. Freeman.

Oh what Joys does Freedom give !
Without it Men ar'n't said to live.
Let vile Souls for *Bribes* obey
Inhuman arbitrary Sway.
Neighbours, like me, your Liberty prize !
No Corruption, no Corruption — nor
Excise.

Enter Mercenary and Procurer.

[They all rise.]

Proc. Gentlemen, I am your very humble
Servant : It rejoices me much to see you
so merry — I hope to participate. — Ladies,
you, indeed, should have received my first
Compliments ; but I hope your Goodness
will excuse my Rudeness.

Mer.

The Honest Men of Taunton. 25

Mer. 'Tis with no small Satisfaction that we here meet our Friends. — We will take care the Ladies shall be accommodated either with a Ball, or Cards, which they chuse.

Proc. Gentlemen, can I be any ways serviceable to you? — Both myself and Pocket are at your Devotion.

Mer. Do any of you labour under Difficulties, expensive Law-Suits, or Oppressions?

Proc. Do you chuse to serve his Majesty in the Customs, or *Excise*?

All. No, no; *No Excise!*

Mer. Gentlemen, you mistake the Thing.

Proc. It was entirely calculated for the Good of the Nation. — But as it is distasteful, you'll hear no more on't.

Mer. You give Credit to disaffected People, who fill your Heads with idle Notions.

Proc. And abominable Falsities. — But what say you Ladies? would not you have the Gentlemen vote the right Way?

Ladies. To be sure, Sir.

Mr. Freeman. But which do you call the right Way, Sir?

Proc. For Mr. *Trimmer*, Honest Master *Freeman*.

Mr. Freeman. That can't be the right Way.

E

Proc.

26 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

Proc. Why fo Sir,

Mr. Freeman. Becaufe 'tis pay'd with Bribery and Corruption, and is the high Road to Slavery.

Proc. To Liberty, Sir, you mean:—It will free you from all thofe miftaken Notions.

Mr. Freeman. I believe it may free us of all our Money.

Proc. You are miftaken, indeed, Sir.

Mr. Freeman. I am not yet convinced.

Proc. Why, fuppofe I have a Mind to make Mrs. *Freeman* a Prefent of a Pair of Gloves — where's the Harm on't?

Mr. Freeman. I am able to buy her a Pair myfelf, Sir, if fhe wants. — But I underftand you.

Proc. I am glad you do, Sir. [*offers her Money.*]

Mr. Freeman [*in a Paffion.*] I charge you for your Life, don't receive any at his Hands. [*She refufes.*]

Proc. Hey-Day! 'twas only a Bauble from London!

Mr. Freeman. From London, or France, 'tis all the fame; fhe fhalln't accept it.

[*Procurer and Mercenary make Offers all round to the Women, but none receive.*]

A I R XV.

And a-Begging we will go, &c.

Mr. Freeman.

How needless are your Offers!

To honest Souls like these:

[Pointing to the Company.]

D'ye think we've empty Coffers,

When Gold itself can't please.

Then for Liberty we'll vote, &c

II.

Mr. Chapman.

No Thousands then shall tempt us

To sell our Country's Cause:

Such Wretches we detest thus

As would subvert the Laws.

Then for Liberty we'll vote, &c.

E 2

Scene

28 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

*Scene changes to a Parlour in the
Tavern.*

Procurer Solus [scratching his Head.]

Proc. This will never do: By Jove, if I fail in my next Attempt, I shall be ready to hang myself.

*Enter Drawer, and Mrs. Firm. Exit
Drawer.*

Mrs. Firm. What would you be pleased to have with me, Sir? — Could you not have spoke above?

Proc. I ask Pardon, Madam; but being a little vex'd and tir'd, made bold, as your Partner, to desire your Company for a Moment to rest yourself.

Mrs. Firm. I can't stay indeed, Sir, neither do I know what you mean.

Proc. [Offering her Money and attempting to be rude with her.] No Harm, my Angel!

Mrs. Firm. No Harm, you impudent Rascal! [Spitting in his Face, and running out.]

AIR

A I R XVI.

Peggy grieves me, &c.

[Standing at the Door.]

For Bribes we never kiss, or vote;
But here bestow them freely:
Yet neither, Scoundrel, is your Lot,
You act so ungentlely.

How insipid will this Tale
Appear to your old Crony;
At *Taunton* you could not prevail
On either Sex for Money.

*Scene changes to a Town-Hall,
Standfast, Trimmer, Procurer, Mercenary,
and a Mob of Electors.*

Proc How goes the Poll?

Teller. Forty-eight for *Trimmer*; Forty-six for *Standfast*.

Proc. Then *Trimmer* has it. — Cryer, make Proclamation, if all have polled.

Enter

30 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

*Enter Freeman, Chapman, Constant,
and Firm.*

Teller. No, Sir, they have not all poll'd ;
here are four together.

Proc. Then we have lost it : D—n
them.

Teller. Who do you vote for Mr. *Free-*
man ?

Freeman. For *Standfast*.

Teller. Mr. *Chapman* ?

Chap. For *Standfast*.

Teller. Mr. *Constant* ?

Const. For *Standfast*.

Teller. Mr. *Firm* ?

Firm. For *Standfast*.

Teller. Then Gentlemen, Mr. *Standfast*
has gain'd the Election by two, he has Fif-
ty ; and Mr. *Trimmer* Fortyeight.

All. Huzza ! *Standfast* for ever ! —
Liberty and Property ! No Excise !

Freeman.

May our Examples Means sufficient
prove,
For more in the same shining Path to
move.

To

The Honest Men of Taunton. 31

To stop Corruption bravely let's essay,
Mar Bribes, and give fair Liberty the
Day.

Heav'ns choicest Favours shall reward
our Toil.

And Peace and Plenty ever bless this Isle.

Exeunt omnes.

NEW BALAD

By Way of Epilogue.

Sung by the
the Christian Freeman.



Y

For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,

For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,

For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
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For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,

For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,
For honest men and true, who stand for right,

A New



A

New BALLAD,
By Way of Epilogue.

Sung by the Person who performed
the Character of Freeman.

YE Knaves, and ye Fools, Maids, Widows, and
Wives,

Come cast away Care, and rejoice all your Lives ;
For since England was England, I dare boldly say,
There ne'er was such Cause for a Thanksgiving Day :

For if we're but wise,
And vote for the Excise,

Sir Blue-string declares (and you know he ne'er lies)
He'll dismiss the whole Custom-house rascally Crew,
And fix in each Town an Exciseman, or two.

Excisemen

II.

Excisemen are oft' the Byc-blows of the Great,
And therefore 'tis meet that they live by the State ;
Besides, we all know they are mighty well bred,
For every one of them can both write and read :
Thus ennobled by Blood,
And taught for our Good,
This Right to rule o'er us, can ne'er be withstood ;
For sure 'tis unjust, as well as unfit
We should sell our own Goods without their Permit.

III.

*Who would think it a Hardship, that Men so polite
Should enter their Houses by Day or by Night,
To poke in each Hole, and examine their Stock,
From the Cask of right Nants, to their Wife's Hol-
land Smock?*

*He's as cross as the Devil
That censures as evil*

*A Visit so courteous, so kind and so civil :
Since to sleep in our Beds without their Permit,
Were in a free Country a Thing most unfit.*

IV.

*When we're absent they'll visit, and look to our Houses,
Will tutor our Daughters, and comfort our Spouses,
F Condescend*

34 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

*Condescend at our Cost to eat and to drink, [stink.
That our Ale mayn't turn sour, our Victuals mayn't
To such a Commerce
None can be averse,*

*Since every one knows it is better than worse :
Then let us caress them, and shew we are wise,
By holding our Tongues, Boys, and shutting our Eyes.*

V.

*An Excise that is general sets us quite free
From the Thralldom of Trials by Judge and Ju-y,
And puts us into a right summary Way
Of paying but what the Commissioners say ;
And what need we fear
Their being severe,*

*Who for fining us have but a Thousand a Year ;
'Tis better on such chosen Men to rely,
Than on Reason, or Law, or an honest Ju-y.*

VI.

*Since the H—ns have left us, and scorn our poor Pay,
G——r and D——k are in a bad Way,
'Tis therefore high Time to augment our Land-Force,
And double our Files, both of Foot and of Horse :
The prolifick Excise,
Will beget these Supplies,*

*And Great Britain blefs with two Standing Armies,
Our*

The Honest Men of Taunton. 35

*Our Freedom and Properties safe to defend,
And our Fears of the Pope and Pretender to end.*

VII.

*An Excise for all Knaves yields Places most fit,
And will furnish our Fools with Store of bought Wit;
'Twill enable each Force to oppress or protect
All who vote, or vote not, as he shall direct:
'Twill increase the Supplies,
And the Number of Spies,
And strengthen Sir Blue's Hands to bribe our Allies;
What to all Sorts such Blessings does freely dispence,
Must surely be sigh'd for by all Men of Sense.*

VIII.

*Moreover, this Project, if right understood,
Will produce to the Nation abundance of Good;
In Coffee and Tea bow our Trade is increas'd,
If not the fair Dealers, the Smugglers at least!
Civil List 'twill amend
By fining false Friend, [End;
And the Nation's true Sinking Fund prove in the
Then South-Sea, and India, and Bank never fear,
Your Security's certain for more than one Year.*

IX.

*Then ye Knaves, and ye Fools, ye Maids, Widows,
and Wives,
Come cast away Care, and rejoice all your Lives,
For*

36 *The Downfal of Bribery: Or,*

*For, since England was England, I dare boldly say,
There ne'er was such Cause for a Thanksgiving Day:*

*For if we're but wise,
And vote for the Excise,*

*Sir Blue-string declares (and you know he ne'er lies)
The Merchant and Tradesmen, if his Project but take,
Shall have their free Choice, to hang, drown, or
break.*

F I N I S.
4 AP 54



